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CS Ch 10: Desperation



Fawx's feet were killing her. Teffri had warned her that not wearing the heels was likely to cause a lot of pain but she couldn't have imagined how much she needed them. Still, speed was the key and no amount of speed would be possible in those heels. She would just have to suffer through it. She was more disturbed by the bouncing of her new, large assets. They hurt like hell. The Captain had never imagined desiring a bra.

Novak had the gun Moden created strapped to her back. No doubt her feet were killing her too. She huffed down the hallway under its large weight.

Fawx picked up her communicator. "Moden- I have a question for you."

"Uh- who am I speaking with?"

The Captain sighed. "This is the Captain."

"Oh, right. You got hit by the Yrch. Sorry, I forgot."

"Yes, look Moden, I need to know if it is possible to hot wire the scuttle bomb."

A few moments of silence passed. "I'm not sure Captain. I mean, maybe, I don't know. We're kind of told to never mess with the scuttle bomb for very obvious reasons. There are only like five guys in the entire TSF who are authorized to even do diagnostics on them."

"I know that Moden, but I need you to try and figure out if you can hot wire it. Go down to deck 11 where it is kept- the code to open the panel it is behind is 2-7-Epsilon-Beta-3-Pi-4-7. Do you got that?"

"2-7-Epsilon-Beta-3-Pi-4-7, got it. What about the engines? I thought you wanted me to fix those. You told me that was my top priority."

"Priorities have changed. We need that scuttle bomb ready to go. Get one of your engineers to work on the engines."

"Okay then sir. I'll go down there and see if it's possible- but if I accidentally destroy the ship don't say I didn't warn you, sir."

"Duly noted. When you start examining it let me know if it's possible. If it's not I'll have to come up with a different plan."

"Aye sir."

Fawx and Novak reached the elevator; Novak flopped onto the ground and removed the power supply to the gun from her back. "These bodies aren't designed for heavy lifting." She softly massaged her feet. "Or running."

Fawx hefted the power supply onto her back and felt how true Novak's statement was. "They don't seem to be designed for much of anything useful."

"This plan is rather risky Bennis. I can already think of about three different ways it could backfire on us."

"They are risks we have to take. We surpassed the line of worst case scenario a long time ago." Fawx picked up her communicator again as the doors to the elevator opened. "Petton, the security teams in place yet?" Novak and Fawx

ran back out into the halls.

“Getting there Captain. We’re scrounging up all the weapons we can.”

“Hurry Lt. We only have twelve more minutes before their ship is going to latch onto one of our airlocks.”

“Understood Captain. Petton out.”

Novak hit code to open up the doors to the detention center. There were no guards posted– they were all being used to prepare for Irium’s boarding party. With the exception of the panting of the Sabine’s captain and first officer, there was no noise.

Fawx looked up from the ground, into the cell of their prisoner. The Stasian just stared at the pair of young, buxom women standing in front of her with confusion. After a moment of squinting, her obsidian eyes went wide with surprise, followed by a smirk.

The Captain took off the power supply. “Novak, turn off the muter.”

Novak nodded and pulled herself to her feet. She punched a few keys and deactivated the muter on Xaen’s cell. “Captain Fawx? Is that really you? I know I said to come and see me if the Yrch got you but I didn’t actually expect you to listen. You look good for a Terren. Nice rack.”

Fawx stood up and walked up to the shield. Hours ago, Fawx had towered over the ghost-white woman, now she was almost looking eye to eye with her. “A few hours ago you told me you wanted to hunt again. It’s been a while since you’ve had a chance to use your skills. How would you like that chance?”

The assassin raised an eyebrow. “This seems a desperate move for such a proud TSF captain.”

“The Yrch doesn’t use technology. He’s a mystic– I don’t understand it but he’s using magic. The shaking you felt a few minutes ago was an old enemy of

mine disabling our engines and weapons. We're dead in the water. That ship that just attacked us is about to board us. The Yrch depleted our weapons supply so we don't have a good shot at fending off their attack."

"Yeah, that sounds like the definition of desperation."

"Earlier I had to fend off an attack from a Minalonian ship that wanted you for assassinating the ship's uncle who was some kind of important government official. That captain risked starting a second war with us to get you. Irium, the Captain of the ship about to board us, says after he's done sedating us, he's going to collect you and sell you back to the Minalonians."

Xaen scoured over the Captain's face looking for any trace of a lie. Fawx continued. "Here's the deal I'm offering you. That weapon I put down has one shot in it. It's designed to kill the Yrch. I want to hire you to kill the Yrch and as many of Irium's boarding party within your capabilities. Your payment will be your freedom."

Xaen paced her cell. "Why wouldn't I just try my luck convincing your friend that keeping me as a crew member is worth more than selling me to the Minalonians?"

"You're an assassin; not an employee. Moreover he can't kill you if you betray him for a higher bidder than him. You're too big of a risk for him to take you on as a crew member. He's not stupid."

The Stasian nodded her head. "How do I know you won't try and kill me?"

"We have a big enough problem right now without adding you to the list. As soon as they start retreating back to their ship, you will follow them onto their ship and take off with them. I have no idea where they would go. But the Yrch would be dead and if you laid low you could wait for their ship to dock and then you could slip back into that underworld you're so comfortable in."

Scratching the bottom of her chin, she eyed the Captain. "And you won't pursue?"

“Our engines still need to be repaired along with our weapons system. First chance we got we’re going to run, not pursue. I have a crew to worry about. Look, they will be boarding us in a little under ten minutes. You accept the deal or not?”

She chuckled. “I have one question for you cutie- what makes you think you can trust me?”

Fawx lowered her gaze. “Nothing makes me think I can trust you. You’re a murderer. I’m making this deal because it’s our best shot at protecting my crew. Nothing more.”

Xaen grinned wickedly at the Captain. “Good. Then we have no delusions either way on what’s going on. I accept your offer. My services are yours.”

Fawx flashed a nervous eye to Novak and nodded. Novak punched the keys to the cell. The shield powered down. The assassin, Xaen stepped out of her cell and stretched. “So, what’s the plan?”

Novak handed an extra communicator to Xaen. “Our navigator is monitoring the enemy’s movements. Prior to boarding, the enemy will no doubt do a scan of our ship to get a better idea where everyone is positioned. Without our shields we can’t prevent them from getting an accurate scan. If they found a Stasian body signature outside of the detention block they would know something is up. We need you to stay in your cell until our navigator gives you the signal to go. She’ll then give you directions to where the fight is.”

Fawx gestured to Moden’s gun. “This is the gun that will kill the Yrch. Our Engineering Officer designed it using the same technology that kept you in your cell. It only has one shot; after that the circuits will fry. You’re going to have to make that shot deadly.”

“Do not worry, Fawx. Deadly is what I do. What about after I kill the Yrch? Do I get another weapon?”

“No, we are already short on weapons. You’ll have to disarm one of the

boarding party's weapons."

"Easy enough. Is that it?" Fawx nodded. "It's been a pleasure doing business with you, ma'am. Just to put you at ease, I won't be backstabbing you."

"Why not?"

"Let's just say I've found this whole adventure quite amusing- definitely going to be a great story to tell. Also, it's a good plan- very unorthodox. Most TSF Captains don't have the guts to try something like this."

Fawx sighed. "Good. Just be ready to go when you get the signal to run." The Captain turned around to leave.

She felt a cool metal object press to the back of her head. She froze. "Just remember cutie, I can kill anyone on this ship I want. You backstab me you'll be sitting in a pool of your own blood."

Fawx regained her composure and continued walking. "You have nothing to worry about. I gave you my word. That's actually worth something in my world."

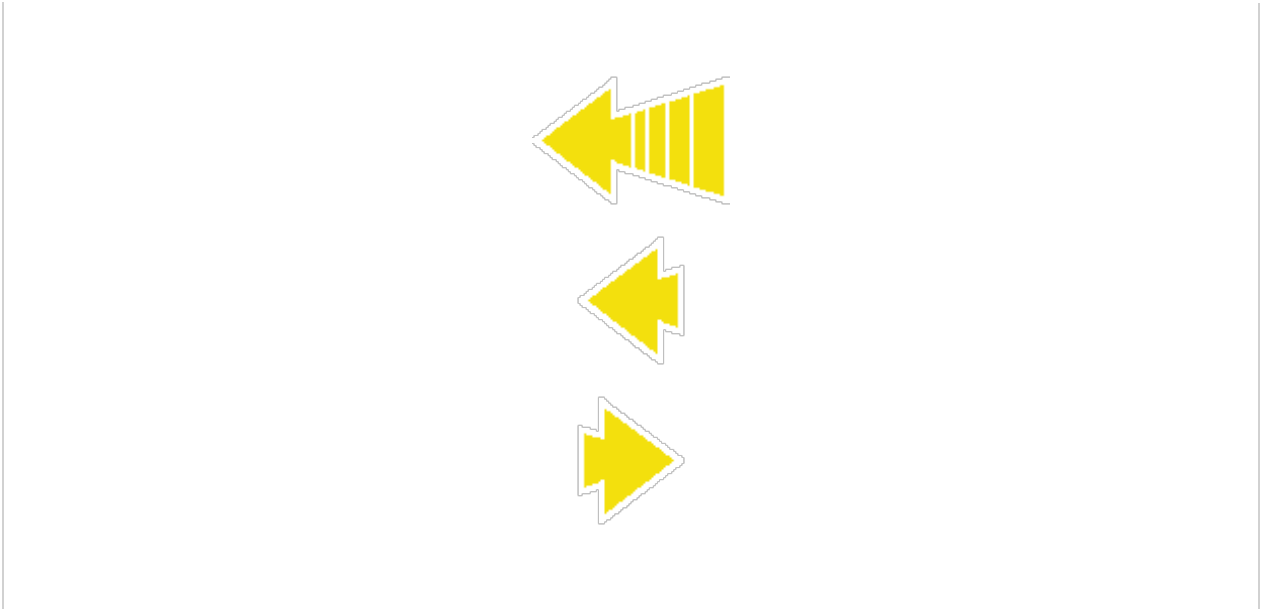
I liked the idea at the end having Xaen reassert her superiority on the ship. I think it was important to have her do that in order to keep her in character.

I want to congratulate the readers who wrote in their theories and got it right that Xaen would be brought back into the story. Please tell me your theories. I love to hear what people are thinking because it helps put me into the shoes of the reader which is something that is hard at times for me to do since I know what's happening next.

So send me your comments. I love them!

Don't run with scissors,

-Taralynn



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